

## BOOKS

# Take an afternoon to read The One Minute Manager

Virginia Burns

"America's answer to Japan's Theory Z!" This comment is from the inside of the newly introduced guide for people in management, *The One Minute Manager* by Kenneth Blanchard, Ph.D. and Spencer Johnson, M.D.

The One Minute Manager's symbol—a one minute readout from the face of a digital watch, which appears on the front cover—is said to be intended to remind each of us to take a minute out of our day to look into the faces of the people we manage. And to realize that they are our most important resources.

The book begins with the realization that most managers are either autocratic—only interested in results, or democratic—only interested in people. "Effective managers manage themselves and the people they work with so that both the organization and the people profit from their presence." Hence the One Minute Manager. Here are excerpts.

"One Minute Goal Setting is the foundation for One Minute Management." In some organizations, job responsibilities are not clear cut or understood by the employee. As a result managers and employees tend to differ in their ideas about what the employee is accountable for.

Knowing job responsibilities is half of one minute goal setting. The other half is setting performance standards. "Once we know what our job is, the manager always makes sure we know what good performance is. In other words, performance standards are clear."

Next are one minute praises. "Help people reach their full potential by catching them doing something right." Managing people means working with your staff when they've done something wrong and when they've done something right. "He (One Minute Manager) looks you straight in the eye and tells you precisely what you did right. Then he shares with you how good he feels about what you did."

The third ingredient to becoming a One Minute Manager is the One Minute Reprimand. This requires first learning the facts and quickly responding to the situation. Again the manager should look the employee straight in the eye and tell him or her precisely what is wrong. To "gunnysack" observations of mishavior and then lay these on the employee at performance review is self-defeating for both of you.

Reprimands are timely situations and will produce immediate feedback, influencing future behavior. It is always important after a reprimand to remind them how much you value them. Reaffirm that you think well of them but not of their performance in this situation. Realize that when the reprimand is over, it's over.

To be a One Minute Manager, some of us might feel that taking only minutes to handle a situation is next to impossible. The authors realize this.

The one minute term is symbolic for encouraging managers to take the time to spend a minute with their people and develop a staff into a long term investment.

The book further explains why these one minute practices work. It's worth reading and applicable to today's management structure.